Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
Dana P. Jacobson, Publisher/Managing Editor
Joseph Mirando, Managing Editor
Rob Mahlert, Associate Editor

Atari Online News, Etc. Staff

Dana P. Jacobson -- Editor
Joe Mirando -- "People Are Talking"
Michael Burkley -- "Unabashed Atariophile"
Albert Dayes -- "CC: Classic Chips"
Rob Mahlert -- Web site
Thomas J. Andrews -- "Keeper of the Flame"

With Contributions by:

Kevin Savetz
Tim Conrardy

To subscribe to A-ONE, change e-mail addresses, or unsubscribe,
log on to our website at: www.atarinews.org
and click on "Subscriptions".
OR subscribe to A-ONE by sending a message to: dpj@atarinews.org
and your address will be added to the distribution list.
To unsubscribe from A-ONE, send the following: Unsubscribe A-ONE
Please make sure that you include the same address that you used to
subscribe from.

To download A-ONE, set your browser bookmarks to one of the
following sites:

http://people.delphiforums.com/dpj/a-one.htm
http://www.icwhen.com/aone/
http://a1mag.atari.org
Now available:
http://www.atarinews.org

Visit the Atari Advantage Forum on Delphi!
http://forums.delphiforums.com/atari/

=~=~=~=

```
   ~ Cybercrime Crackdown!  ~ People Are Talking!    ~ GenEdit Is Updated!
   ~ SmartScreen Unveiled!  ~ Microsoft Loses Suit!  ~ Spam Rage Reality!
   ~ Net Tax Bill Is Close! ~ ASMA Adds New Songs!   ~ PayPal Scam Virus!
   ~ Security Threats Grow! ~ Tax Battle Heats Up!   ~ Kazaa Launches Ads!

                    -* Spyware Is Tricky To Outlaw! *-
                  -* SCO Group Subpoenas Torvalds, OSDL! *-
                -* Ballmer: Security Is Microsoft's Priority! *-



                              =~=~=~=



->From the Editor's Keyboard              "Saying it like it is!"
   """"""""""""""""""""""""""""
```

I don't have much to say this week. However, it just dawned on me that next
week at this time, I'll likely be feasting on Thanksgiving leftovers. I
realize that many of our A-ONE readers are not from the U.S., so please bear
with me. In America, it's a day for giving thanks - for whatever, I guess.
We live in a great country, even with its problems. Hey, where else in the
world could you elect the "Govern-ator"?? Things may not be as pleasant as
we'd all like, but we cope. At least it's a time for gathering of family
and friends, or even spending a quiet day with your immediate family to
enjoy a holiday. From all of us here at A-ONE - Happy Thanksgiving!

Until next time...

```
                              =~=~=~=



              New Version of Hybrid Arts GenEdit !
```

New Version of Hybrid Arts GenEdit!

I am now happy to announce the availability of a new version of
GenEdit. The original v1.1 did not really work very well. It is now
ver 2.02. Thanks is due to the long persuance [sic] of Joe Hlifka (of
Albuquerque, New Mexico) and his team. Joe has prepared three discs
along with an excellent tutorial/manual and example files. Not only
this but will be making available in the near future a CD ROM of the
complete system. Check it all out on The Hybrid Arts Page

http://tamw.atari-users.net/hyart.htm

Tim Conrardy
Tims Atari MIDI World
http://tamw.atari-users.net

              Atari XL Music Archive ASMA v2.7 Adds 124 New Songs

Atari SAP Music Archive, or ASMA, was updated just today. Adding 124 new songs, it is now totaling 1771 tunes. You will find new (or newly found) tunes by Radek Sterba, Grayscale (Grzegorz Kwiatek and Lukasz Sychowicz}, Jakub Husak, Tomasz Liebich, and many others. The archive and players can be found at the ASMA homepage.

http://asma.atari.org/

=~=~=~=

PEOPLE ARE TALKING
compiled by Joe Mirando
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Another week has come and gone, and we're now looking forward to Thanksgiving Day here in The States. While we inventive yanks have come up with several... ummm... interesting ways to prepare turkey, I must confess that none of them can take the place of the traditional roasted variety. I love turkey.

I've heard that Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey to be America's national bird. Personally, I think that the bald eagle was a better choice. Had he prevailed, we probably wouldn't be allowed to eat them.... we'd probably be eating spotted owls for Thanksgiving now! <grin>

Did I mention that I love turkey? Ah. I see that I did. Well, you get the idea.

For those of you who don't live in the United States and could care less about our little self-congratulatory holiday, or those of you who say that it's a sham because of the way native americans were treated, think of it as a monument to honest ideals and good intentions. If that doesn't appease you, all I can say is...

The heck with you... I'M HAVING TURKEY! Did I mention that I love turkey?

This is going to be a short column... the newsgroup hasn't been pulling in the posts that it used to. So let's get to the news and stuff. But before we do, please allow me to wish you a happy, healthy, and safe holiday. Please don't drink and drive. The life you save may be mine.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
===================================

First up, Kenneth Medin asks about ST emulators:

"Has anyone got the latest Gemulator version to boot from a disk image?

I have tried everything(?) I can think of (including HDDRIVER!) but so far the only solution I have found is to run AHDI.PRG from floppy. As floppy access is very slow in "Atari disk mode" this is not a usable setup.

The downloadable diskimages in gem2000x.zip from http://www.emulators.com/ works (but not bootable) but if I try to create a diskimage file with the built-in function (Tools - Create unformatted...) the result is 4 bombs if try to boot with it "mounted".

As it says "unformatted" I tried to format it with HDX but this only gives errors within HDX.PRG . Strange...

I am using an older version (dated 1/1-2001) booting from diskimages with great success. The version available for download now (dated 20/4-2001) however does not want to cooperate.

The host system runs Windows 2000 both at home and at work. At work I use Gemulator to run a rather important TSP (actually "Delivery and Pickup") application that really benefits from higher cpu speeds compared to my TT...

I've been thinking of Aranym (have it running under Debian at home) but it must be able to run under Win2000 at work without too much hassle and as fast as possible. Which is faster for standard monochrome GEM apps, Aranym or Gemulator?

Printing is a must and networking would be fun... Does this work correctly with Aranym under Win2000?"

'Elliot' tells Kenneth:

"I had all sorts of problems with this too (some time ago), I gave up. Many people were saying it had problems with 2K and XP and I think I did some tests with a 98 machine and it worked better. People even put this to the maker but he said it was fine in all Win versions, so.................

I use Steem and play with WIn Aranym from time to time, when it gets better I will use that the most I think."

Brian Roland adds:

"There is a version of Aranym that works with Windows; albeit without some functions of the versions for unix (JIT Compiler?). For most non-multimedia GEM applications (like MPEG movie players) it should work just fine, and may even work with the movie players and such...just more slowly. It can be tricky to set up for the first time however...and does require an Atari type disk image to get started. In your particular case, The only real advantage I can think of to using this over a Windows ST emulator like STeem/GEMulator/Winston/etc. is if you want to run things that would benefit from high resolution displays (I.E. PhotoLine, TrueImage-paint, Imageview, etc...with lots of colors and bigger screens).

Most of the ST emulators for windows are going to lock you into the standard display modes (ST Low, Medium, or High). Some of them offer bigger screen sizes, but you're still going to be locked into the usual ST pallets and color modes. If you want out of those limitations, AFAIK your only options are MagiC PC with its specialized version of NVDI, or Aranym.

Out of the Free emulators, I've installed several on my 533mhz Celeron
WinXP box w/256mb memory. I use STeem the most.

I'm working from memory here....

I believe that my Gemulator setup creates itself a C partition each time it
runs that has nothing on it but the hddriver and a desktop.inf file. You
can't write to this tiny little partition (putting in auto folders for
instance). It then puts my disk image as partition D.

Ultimately...I've switched over to STeem. STeem mounts any directory(ies)
of your choice from the windows file system as a virtual hard disk. It
also supports MIDI, ROM-Cartridge images, extended screen sizes, and all in
all, the emulator works pretty dern well.

Drawbacks to STeem as compared with GEMulator are:

You can't mount HD images that I know of.
It can't mount drives A and B to the real floppy drive; however, you can
mount the PC's floppy as a virtual hard disk. Note it has to be a disk of
a format that windows is happy with. When working with floppies, it's best
to make disk images and go from there.

You can't mount actual Atari Hard Drives like you can with GEMulator.
It seems to have problems loading some accessaries from hard drive that it
will load fine when booting from a Floppy Image.

Definite Pluses are:
The MIDI support...
Support for just about every floppy disk image format known to exist...I.E.
MSA images that are zipped can be read and run without being extracted.
You can set up games/utilities/etc as floppy images...double click them
from windows and STeem will boot up a virtual atari just like that...it's
cool.

It's a small download, and doesn't require HDSpace hungry hard drive
images...so, It's no loss to give it a try

http://steem.atari.org "

Paul Lefebvre asks about finding a new AC adaptor for his Daynaport:

"Would anyone happen to know what type of AC adapter works with Daynaport
SCSI/Link-T. The unit itself does not specify the voltage, milliamps or
polarity. It looks like I should be able to get a universal adapter that
could work given the plug size, but I don't want to fry the thing."

Jim DeClercq tells Paul:

"Dayna has a web site, giving specs for their discontinued products.
Without looking again, I think it is 10 volts DC, center positive.

Before you hook it up, you might want to find their site, and confirm
polarity."

Paul tells Jim:

"Apparently the Dayna products were bought by Intel (http://www.intel.com/support/dayna/index.htm), but no where does it list the type of specs I'm looking for."

Jim replies:

"My apologies... The web pages I thought were still there were still there the last time I looked. I do remember that all Dynaport stuff used the same power supply.

If one was marked 12v center positive, they all take that.

That 10 volt number came from a 1X NEC CDROM I needed to get working again. 12 v. is probably right for the Dyna.

I have not found the generic replacement power supplies to be underdesigned. I bought one rated for 750 ma for a 1000 ma application, and it worked fine, and did not get warm. I think that means that the smallest you can find at Radio Shack will do the job.

The last I saw of the missing web page, it listed voltage and polarity only, and not power required. It cannot take much. It only moves electrons.

I have two of those things, an 801 and an 802, and neither of them mention the power required."

Brian Roland asks:

"What are some of your favorite games that work in ST High (Monochrome) mode?"

'Joe' starts off the list:

"Empire
ftp://ftp.cs.tu-berlin.de/pub/atari/games/Medwayboys/med_026.st "

John Garone adds:

"Add Ballerburg II to the list (find on Chapelie FTP)"

Daniel Dreibelbis jumps in and adds:

"Super Breakout and Onyx are two examples of my favorite games to play when I had my monochrome ST system."

Grzegorz Pawlik contributes:

"Exodrom

http://gregory.atari.pl/pliki/exodrom.zip

fits exactly into my, erm, intellectual level. <grin>

Maurits van de Kamp adds his picks:

"I like Skulldiggery, a Boulderdash clone written in STOS, and working
nicely in Monochrome. "

'Marius' adds:

"Two of my absolute ALLTIME favorites are:

Secret of Monkey Island
Stone Age

These games are great and work fine on monochrome atari ST system. I don't
know if the 'cracked' versions do, but I have the original disks, and they
work fine on mono."

Matthias Arndt asks about PNG graphics in CAB:

"Does a PNG plug-in or decoder for the old freeware CAB exist for viewing
inline PNG images without an external viewer?
If so, does it work under plain TOS on an unexpanded Falcon?"

Martin Tarenskeen tells Matthias:

"I would suggest to download the demo version of CAB 2.8 from the ASH
website. It is almost fully functional. Only the hotlist doesn't work
(create one with your free CAB version and use that one in CAB 2.8).
Get the Dan Ackerman's CAB.OVL for STiK/STiNG, or, if you use MiNT,
the special CAB.OVL for MiNTnet (with SSL support !) and there you go.

Most important, CAB 2.8 supports PNG images. By the way: So does the new
and free Highwire browser. Have you tried that already ? It can't do
everything yet, but it is getting better with every new release."

Matthias replies:

"Seems like a very good idea to me - hotlist is not a problem as that is
rather rudimentary in CAB.

I've tried Highwire but I doubt it will work networked under plain TOS.
I do not like to use MagiC and Mint is not an option due to memory and hard
disk limitations.
PNG support in Highwire is broken btw., it does not render interlaced PNGs
properly.

I'll go with CAB 2.8 - doesn't hurt to try that out."

'Marius' asks:

"Is there anyone who can provide some link of that highwire thing?"

Matthias Arndt tells Marius:

"http://highwire.atari-users.net/"

Well folks, that's it for this week. Please remember to have a SAFE
holiday. Fun and merriment are of little use if you end up injured... or
worse.

'Till next week, remember to make sure you listen to what they are saying
when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

                              =~=~=~=

->In This Week's Gaming Section - 'Prince of Persia'!
  """"""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

                              =~=~=~=

->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News   - The Latest Gaming News!
  """""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

     Prince of Persia Offers Lush Made-in-Canada Video Gaming Experience

Ubi Soft Canada, the Montreal-based video game designers who won kudos for
their stylish Splinter Cell title, has gone back in time to create another
lush gaming experience.

Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time (available for GameCube, PlayStation 2,
Xbox and PC) takes you to a medieval land where a young prince has been
deceived into triggering an ancient curse. Equipped with a sword and a
magic dagger, the prince joins forces with Princess Farah (a Posh Spice
lookalike) to put things right.

The game, the latest in a Prince of Persia franchise that dates back to
1989, is gorgeous to look at and easy to play. The thin guidebook is
testament to the fact that gamers can learn as they go, helped by simple
yet fluid controls.

Hints help the gamer as they work their way through the early stages.

"It is in fact easy to play, on purpose," said Yannis Mallat, the game's
executive producer.

"But very difficult to master, so that truly everyone can enjoy it."

There are enough advanced moves, such as countering attacks, to satisfy

hardcore gamers, Mallat believes. The fight sequences are simple to play "but very intense."

While the prince has to fight off a variety of foes, the game also offers a challenging range of venues - in and around the cursed Palace of Azad.

That means finding secret passages, climbing pillars and swinging on bars like an Olympic gymnast. The prince can also run along walls - briefly - which helps his cause.

Adding to his arsenal is the magic dagger, which allows the hero to turn back or slow time briefly. It's awfully useful when you fall off a cliff or take a sword to the back.

Rewinding time is a gas, as the prince moves backwards in silky smooth slow motion, like a dream sequence.

Each chapter is like one big puzzle, with the challenge getting from point A to B. Visions help the gamer with clues as to what lies ahead.

The made-in-Canada game was 26 months in the making and was built from scratch. The only thing Mallat's team had in July 2001 was the licence.

At peak times, there were 120 people working on the project.

"Very long hours, especially at the end," said Mallat. "The most devoted team I've ever seen in my life. Truly we're talking 20 hours a day and sometimes 36 hours in a row."

The franchise dates back to the original Prince of Persia, created by Jordan Mechner after graduating from Yale. That was followed by Prince of Persia 2: The Shadow and the Flame (1993) and Prince of Persia 3D (1999).

Mallat gave his design team a pair of seemingly contradictory goals: be faithful to the licence but start with a blank page.

The first two versions of the franchise ended up selling more than three million copies each and, according to Mallat, helped pave the way for action-adventure games like Tomb Raider. But the last one, Prince of Persia 3D, did not do well and that put some extra pressure on the Ubi Soft team.

"We knew from the beginning that if we screw up, we screw up the licence forever," said Mallat.

The backdrop to the game is superb, with Mallat noting that there was cross-pollination between designers for Prince of Persia and Splinter Cell, an award-winning game in its own right that shipped first.

Splinter Cell, the story of a covert operative set in the present day, was widely lauded for such realistic touches as curtains swaying back and forth in the backgrounds.

It turns out that Prince of Persia inspired the technology.

Mallat asked his designers to come up with a way of depicting a realistic rope, rather than rely on animation. His designer came up with a code to capture that realism, using real physics.

"And it was amazing," said Mallat.

A colleague working on Splinter Cell liked what he saw and asked if he
could share the code. Over the weekend, the Splinter Cell designer added
to the design, turning the rope into curtains.

"Which is more rope, put together," explained Mallat. "When we saw that it
was like 'Wow, that's cool. Can we have the curtain."'

The answer was yes, so both games benefited.

Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time hit the shelves with a bevy of awards
already under its belt. The game won a Game Critics Award as the best
action/adventure game showcased at the influential E3 industry convention.
It has also won awards from the IGN.com and GameSpy.com websites, and PSE2
and GamePro magazines.

                              =~=~=~=

                        A-ONE's Headline News
                  The Latest in Computer Technology News
                     Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

            Microsoft's Ballmer Says Security Is Top Priority

Microsoft Chief Executive Steve Ballmer said on Monday security is the
software giant's top priority as it seeks to allay worries about computer
viruses while fending off calls for Asian governments to develop an
alternative to its Windows operating system.

"Our number one priority is investing to make our products more secure,"
Ballmer said in a speech at Tokyo's Waseda University after Microsoft
agreed to cooperate in training students there about security for the
Windows operating system.

The Microsoft head is on a weeklong tour of Japan in which he will seek to
ease concerns about the safety of its products after computer viruses
exploited security holes and brought global Internet traffic to a crawl in
August and September.

Computer industry associations from Japan, South Korea and China said last
Friday they would strongly recommend their governments seek open-source
software, such as Linux, as an alternative to Windows.

Microsoft has said open-source software - which can be copied and modified
freely - does not ensure a safer product.

Critics question the safety of using Microsoft's operating systems for
government computers since the firm, based in Redmond, Washington State,
does not disclose its source codes, the underlying blueprint for its
programs.

Microsoft tried to soothe those concerns by urging Japan to participate in
its Government Security Program, which allows governments and international
organizations access to source codes and special training for officials.

Japan has not yet agreed to join the program, and then trade minister Takeo Hiranuma said in September it would be useful to seek a new kind of software.

Ballmer, in a lively 45-minute speech to nearly 600 students, faculty members and reporters, said software developers and governments should work together to solve security problems.

"We need to make sure that when there are problems, the damage is small and quickly corrected."

After the speech, a group of students handed him a huge bouquet of flowers, while other students crowded around him seeking autographs or handshakes.

New Virus Appears as PayPal Scam

If you get an e-mail message warning you that your PayPal account is about to expire, don't open it. If you open it, don't double-click the attachment. If you double-click the attachment, don't complete the form asking for your credit card information. And if you do fill in the form, call your credit card company immediately.

And don't blame PayPal. The problem is an e-mail virus, Mimail.I, first spotted on November 13. Most viruses are sick jokes; this one's out to steal your money.

Mimail (pronounced "my mail") arrives in an e-mail that appears to be from PayPal. In very convincing language, it states that your account will expire soon unless you resubmit your credit card information. "We apologize for any inconvenience that this may cause," the text politely reads.

The letter even appears concerned about your privacy: "Please do not send your personal information through e-mail, as it will not be as secure." Instead, it asks that you run the attached program. That's where you enter your valuable information, which it then sends to four different e-mail addresses.

It also scours your hard drive for new e-mail addresses to send the same bogus message. These messages, like the one you got, are "spoofed" to appear as if they came from PayPal.

"It appears to be another step in the advancement of spam," says David E. Sorkin, an associate professor with the Center for Information Technology and Privacy Law, at John Marshall Law School. "A few months ago there was talk about spammers using viruses to send spam. Now they're using them for fraud."

Bryson Gordon, senior product manager for McAfee's Security Consumer Division, finds this "far more sophisticated in social engineering [than previous worms]... We're starting to see marked change in the battle with viruses: a worm for profit."

Luckily Mimail hasn't spread very far - at least not yet.

"It's not a major event. We're seeing less than a hundred infections overall," says Vincent Weafer, a senior director at antivirus vendor

Symantec Security Response.

As Weafer notes, that can change. "103259 Klez sat around for about a week and then shot up," he says. But he doubts this one will spread like Klez. Mimail is a "relatively easy one to explain. You can say 'If you see this, delete it.'"

But justice is not likely to be served. According to Weafer, the culprits will get caught "Only if they're stupid." The logical trail to follow, of course, is the four e-mail addresses embedded in the code, but it's possible to set up anonymous e-mail accounts without identifying yourself, or set up an account with a stolen credit card.

One thing is for certain: We'll see this sort of trick again, so it pays to take precautions.

Be suspicious of any e-mail that asks for personal information, security experts advise.

PayPal promises it "will never ask for your password or account information in an e-mail," and most other companies on the Internet do likewise. If an e-mail message contains a link to a form, examine the URL closely - it could be just one letter away from the correct domain name.

Report suspicious e-mail to the company that is allegedly its source. PayPal has an e-mail address, spoof@paypal.com, for just this purpose.

And, of course, keep your antivirus applications and definitions up to date. Users of Symantec's Norton AntiVirus products, as well as security programs from BitDefender and Network Associates, were able to download the appropriate protection by last Friday morning. In addition, both BitDefender and Network Associates offer free Mimail fixes on their Web sites.

Spyware Would Be Tricky to Outlaw, Group Says

Lawmakers have yet to get a handle on the best way to combat computer "spyware" that tracks Internet users' online activity, a nonprofit policy group said on Tuesday.

Rather than drafting narrowly targeted legislation to outlaw specific snooping tactics, Congress should establish broad online privacy rights to protect against secret online surveillance, the Center for Democracy and Technology said.

Concern about spyware has grown over the past several years as online advertisers and song-swapping networks like Kazaa have placed programs on users' computers to monitor their activity or use their computers' processors for other activities.

Spyware can crash computers or slow their performance, and it is often difficult to ferret out. Furthermore, many users are frequently unaware that they are being monitored for commercial purposes.

Though some spyware may violate communications and computer-trespass laws, most programs are protected by agreements buried in long, detailed disclosures that users click on when they download other programs, CDT said

in a report.

Some spyware may violate deceptive-business laws, but to date the Federal Trade Communication has taken no action against spyware merchants.

"We have followed up on some allegations and to date we haven't found things that violated the law or violated individual privacy," said FTC spokeswoman Claudia Bourne-Farrell, adding that the agency took consumer privacy seriously.

Several lawmakers have introduced bills targeting spyware, but they are so broadly written that they could outlaw largely innocuous technologies like "cookies" and software-update utilities which pose little threat, CDT said.

"The slipperiness of the term 'spyware' makes it very hard to craft a definition that is precise enough for use in legislation," the report said. "For this reason, we believe it will be extremely difficult to adequately address all of the privacy concerns with spyware outside the context of general privacy legislation."

Attempts to pass a broad online privacy bill have gone nowhere in the past several years. The Senate Commerce Committee passed one version in the last session of Congress, but it never came to the floor for a vote.

Kazaa now offers a spyware-free version of its popular "peer to peer" software.

Security Threats Will Get More Serious

Taking on ever more sophisticated and aggressive cyberattacks requires a new approach and a lot of security software and services, John Thompson, chair and chief executive officer of Symantec said on Wednesday in a keynote speech at Comdex.

Today's practice of applying security updates after a software vulnerability becomes known or after a virus has been reported won't cut it in tomorrow's world of super-fast spreading worms and viruses that will surface with increasing speed after a software flaw is published, Thompson said.

Soon computers will face "Warhol" threats that spread across the Internet and infect systems worldwide within 15 minutes, Thompson said, referencing Andy Warhol's line about 15 minutes of fame. In a few years, the Internet will be hit by "flash" threats that can spread in just seconds, he said.

"These types of threats are fundamentally unstoppable by today's technologies. We will need proactive technologies that can protect and stop new attacks on the fly," he said.

Even more than today, businesses will need multiple layers of security, starting with securing key applications, and intelligence in the form of an alert system, Thompson said. "The best way is to know about threats and vulnerabilities before they occur," he said, pitching his company's security response and threat management services.

Thompson also criticized the various antispam laws that have been passed in the U.S., saying that such legislation is "unmanageable" and gives

Internet users "a false sense of hope." Instead Internet service providers and the industry should take technological measures to block mass e-mailers, he said.

And for all those unemployed IT workers, Thomson suggested security training. "We will have a shortfall of tens of thousands of security professionals in the next couple of years in the U.S.," he said.

One attendee at the Las Vegas trade show said Thompson's speech was disappointing. The Symantec chief discussed threats, but his speech lacked concrete advice, said George Hallahan, of Integrated Datasystems, a computer sales and service point in Keene, New Hampshire.

Congress Reaches Deal on Anti-Spam Bill

The first federal law against unsolicited commercial e-mail – the online scourge popularly known as "spam" – came a step closer to reality today after House and Senate negotiators ironed out differences over key provisions.

The House is expected to vote on the bill today and lawmakers expect to send it to the White House early next week, said Ken Johnson, a spokesman for House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman W.J. "Billy" Tauzin (R-La.).

"For the first time during the Internet era, American consumers will have the ability to say no to spam," Tauzin said in a prepared statement.

The legislation would empower the Federal Trade Commission to establish a national "do-not-spam" list similar to the anti-telemarketing "do-not-call" list, and it would impose stiff jail sentences on e-mail marketers who violate the law. The compromise bill would also preempt tougher anti-spam laws already passed by the states.

FTC Chairman Timothy Muris has questioned the feasibility of a do-not-spam registry, saying it would be cumbersome to administer and wouldn't stop rogue spammers from sending unwanted mail.

The legislation would make it a crime – punishable by up to five years in jail – for e-mail marketers to mask their identities by falsifying their return addresses.

Stiffening an anti-spam bill approved by the Senate last month, the compromise version would double the largest fines that could be imposed against spammers from $1 million to $2 million and remove a loophole that would have allowed marketers to dodge key provisions of the bill in cases where they have existing relationships with consumers, said Jennifer O'Shea, spokeswoman for Sen. Conrad Burns (R-Mont.).

Anti-spam advocates are unhappy because the deal struck today would invalidate tougher state anti-spam laws. California and Washington, for example, allow people to sue spammers, whereas the federal bill does not. California's law also allows fines against spammers of up to $1,000 per e-mail message with a cap at $1 million.

Some anti-spam experts also are skeptical of the congressional effort because it caters to groups like the Direct Marketing Association, which

they consider to be not much different from fly-by-night anonymous spammers.

Rather than telling marketers to stop sending unsolicited messages, the bill creates a legal framework for e-mail marketers, and that sends the wrong message, said John Mozena, the co-founder of the Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial Email (CAUCE).

"The problem today is not that there's too much unregulated spam, the problem is that there's too much spam in general," Mozena said.

U.S. Crackdown on Cybercrime Nets 125

Federal prosecutors have charged more than 125 suspected computer hackers, identity thieves and other cyberspace scammers in a nationwide crackdown on Internet crime, law enforcement officials said Thursday.

Those facing charges include run-of-the-mill counterfeiters and software pirates, as well as a man who illegally tried to sell Congressional Medals of Honor online and another man who hijacked the Web site of the al-Jazeera Arabic language news network to display a patriotic U.S. message.

"The information superhighway should be a conduit for communication, information and commerce, not an expressway to crime," Attorney General John Ashcroft said. "It is a top federal law enforcement priority to stop crime on the Internet."

The investigation, dubbed "Operation Cyber Sweep," has uncovered about 125,000 victims with losses topping $100 million over the past several months. Seventy indictments to date have led to arrests or convictions of 125 people, with more expected as the probe continues.

The investigation involves 34 U.S. attorneys and a host of law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, Secret Service, Postal Inspection Service and Federal Trade Commission. Announcement of the arrests was intended in part to reinforce the government's commitment to tracking down computer crime perpetrators.

"Cyperspace is not outer space," said FTC Chairman Timothy Muris. "It makes no difference where you break the law."

Many of the cases detailed Thursday involve stolen credit card numbers, illegal drugs, and sale of counterfeit goods and computer software. Some were more unusual:

_John William Racine II, a Web site designer in Norco, Calif., pleaded guilty to charges of wire fraud and illegal wiretapping after he managed to divert Internet traffic and e-mail from the al-Jazeera Web site to one he designed. That site contained an American flag shaped like the United States and the words "Let Freedom Ring." Racine was sentenced to three years' probation, a $2,000 fine and 1,000 hours of community service.

_Edward Fedora was charged in western New York with illegal sale of a Congressional Medal of Honor, which the government alleges he offered to auction online for up to $30,000. Undercover FBI agents bought one medal in May and seized another during a meeting with Fedora in Buffalo, authorities say. One of the medals was awarded for service during the

Spanish-American War and the other to a Civil War soldier who fought at
Gettysburg and Bull Run.

_Allan E. Carlson was charged in a federal indictment in Philadelphia with
hacking into computers around the country to launch e-mail spam attacks
containing his complaints about the management of the Philadelphia Phillies
baseball team. Carlson also was charged with identity theft for allegedly
using in his scheme e-mail addresses of Philadelphia newspaper reporters
and the Phillies.

_Helen Carr pleaded guilty Oct. 28 in Alexandria, Va., federal court to
charges of sending fake e-mails to America Online customers urging them to
update credit card numbers to continue their service. In fact, no such
updates were needed. An accomplice of Carr's is serving a 37-month prison
sentence.

The crackdown stemmed from indications that Internet fraud continues to
rise. The Internet Fraud Complaint Center, run in part by the FBI, referred
some 58,000 complaints to law enforcement in the first nine months of 2003,
up 10,000 from 2002.

Earlier this year, a similar Internet crime sweep called "Operation E-Con"
resulted in charges against more than 130 people.

            Penis Enlargement Web Ads Prompt California Spam Rage

Call it spam rage: A Silicon Valley computer programmer has been arrested
for threatening to torture and kill employees of the company he blames for
bombarding his computer with Web ads promising to enlarge his penis.

In one of the first prosecutions of its kind in the state that made "road
rage" famous, Charles Booker, 44, was arrested on Thursday and released on
$75,000 bond for making repeated threats to staff of an unnamed Canadian
company between May and July, the U.S. Attorney's office for Northern
California said on Friday.

Booker threatened to send a "package full of Anthrax spores" to the
company, to "disable" an employee with a bullet and torture him with a
power drill and ice pick; and to hunt down and castrate the employees
unless they removed him from their e-mail list, prosecutors said.

In a telephone interview with Reuters, Booker acknowledged that he had
behaved badly but said his computer had been rendered almost unusable for
about two months by a barrage of pop-up advertising and e-mail.

"Here's what happened: I go to their Web site and start complaining to
them, would you please, please, please stop bothering me," he said. "It
just sort of escalated ... and I sort of lost my cool at that point."

Booker, of Sunnyvale, California, now faces up to five years in prison and
a $250,000 fine, with a preliminary hearing scheduled for next month. He
said he did not own any guns or have access to anthrax.

Booker said the problem stemmed from a program he mistakenly downloaded
from the Internet that brought a continuous stream of advertising to his
computer.

Booker identified the object of his rage as Albion Medical, which claims to produce the "Only Reliable, Medically Approved Penis Enhancement."

The company's Web site does not provide any telephone numbers for contact.

In other cases, Internet vigilantes have bombarded spammers with both unsolicited e-mail and regular mail and phone calls, launched attacks on spammers' computers and posted spammers' personal information on the Internet, according to reports.

Separately, lawmakers in Washington said the U.S. House of Representatives could vote as early as Friday on a measure to outlaw most Internet spam. Lawmakers hope to pass a national anti-spam bill before a much tougher California state law goes into effect on Jan. 1.

SCO Subpoenas Torvalds, OSDL

The SCO Group is taking aim at Linux creator and founder Linus Torvalds and the Open Source Development Labs in an open courtroom.

On Wednesday, the Beaverton, Ore.-based Linux organization and its newly appointed fellow, Torvalds, received subpoenas from attorneys for The SCO Group regarding the company's pending litigation with IBM.

According to a statement issued on Friday by the OSDL, SCO requested that the organization and Torvalds release documents to be used in SCO's legal case against IBM, which was filed last spring.

SCO claims that IBM violated its Unix contract with SCO by improperly donating Unix code to the Linux kernel. Torvalds is the chief developer of the Linux kernel.

The OSDL said it will pay for Torvalds' legal representation. The organization is represented by AterWynne LLP, also of Portland.

Gates Unveils Junk E-Mail Software

Microsoft Corp. Chairman Bill Gates has announced new junk e-mail filtering technology called SmartScreen at his keynote address at the annual Comdex trade show in Las Vegas.

Gates, who was the keynote speaker Sunday at Comdex for the 20th year in a row, also unveiled new software to improve network security, which will be available to customers under a "beta" test program starting in January.

The SmartScreen technology will be used in several products. The technology will use algorithms to judge whether incoming e-mail messages qualify as junk e-mail and filter them out before they get to the end user's e-mailbox, said Corey duBrowa, a Microsoft spokesman.

The other product focuses on improving the overall security of a network, including simplifying how to keep software up to date and with its security holes patched.

The products fit into Gates' overall discussion of "seamless computing,"
in which computers and other devices can "talk" automatically and trade
data without technological hiccups or security issues.

Such "seamless computing" is happening already on a small level. For
instance, cell phone users are able to connect with their e-mail servers
to read their messages.

Gates also discussed an improved version of Windows XP for tablet PCs -
notebook-like personal computers - due out in the first half of 2004,
according to a Microsoft news release. The new version of the operating
system will include better handwriting recognition software.

Gates demonstrated Microsoft Research's Stuff I've Seen project, which is
developing a tool for rapidly finding material that users have seen -
whether it was an e-mail, Web site or document. The tool is not to be
incorporated in any products anytime soon, but shows people some of where
Microsoft's billions of dollars in research is going, said duBrowa.

A humorous video was also prepared for the address, depicting Gates and
chief executive Steve Ballmer in a spoof of the popular futuristic film,
The Matrix. Gates took the role of spiritual guide Morpheus who gives
Ballmer - playing Neo, the savior - an "innovation pill" to aid him in
battling competitors.

Senators Spar Over Internet Access Taxes

An increasingly acrimonious battle over the size and scope of a bill to
permanently ban Internet access taxes has led to an impasse in the U.S.
Senate that could derail the proposal altogether.

Congress was expected to complete action on the bill before lawmakers
adjourn for the year, but several senators representing states that stand
to lose tax revenue if the proposal becomes law are blocking the measure,
arguing that it would prevent state and local governments from taxing a
raft of other Internet-based products and services.

Sen. Thomas Carper (D-Del.) said he will block plans by the moratorium's
chief sponsors - Sens. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and George Allen (R-Va.) - to
include it in a massive $284 billion federal spending package.

Carper said that the moratorium bill's language is so broadly written that
it would free telecommunications carriers from a range of taxes that
provide critical funding for state and local governments.

The Delaware Democrat and his Senate allies said they prefer an alternative
proposal for a two-year extension that would not change the definition of
which Internet services are tax-exempt. Some of the senators come from
states that are currently allowed to tax Internet access under a
grandfather clause included in the original ban. Under the new bill, they
would lose that right.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) said that he would seek a
nine-month extension of the tax ban if the senators fail to reach a
compromise.

Allen decried efforts to scale back the permanent ban. "Extending the

current law for nine months is like punting from the 20-yard line right before halftime," he said. "This is another excuse to provide an opportunity for States to begin taxing the Internet, especially broadband DSL."

The Internet tax ban moratorium was first enacted in 1998 and renewed in 2001; it expired again on Nov. 1. Supporters argue that tax exemption keeps Internet access affordable and entices more consumers to get online. The telecommunications sector and high-tech businesses are urging Congress to clarify that states cannot continue taxing Internet access technologies that were in their infancy five years ago, including DSL.

Supporters say this change is necessary because a growing number of states and local governments are taxing DSL access like regular telephone service. States have traditionally taxed telephone service, and say DSL should be taxed since it is delivered through regular phone lines.

But the states worry that the new language in the bill could be interpreted to make all kinds of Internet services tax-exempt, including online movie and music downloads. They also are worried about losing revenues to Internet-based telephone services, which are becoming more popular. According to a September study by the Multistate Tax Commission, this could reduce state and local revenue bases by $8.75 billion annually by 2006.

Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), cosponsor of the permanent tax ban, said the states are inflating their loss in a quiet bid to eventually get the power to tax e-mail and instant messaging services. Wyden said if the Senate passes anything less than the permanent extension he would push for additional language in the bill to specially bar states from taxing such services.

The states that are grandfathered under the original moratorium - Hawaii, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin - could collectively lose between $80 million and $120 million a year in tax revenue, the Congressional Budget Office estimates. But the CBO said the states could lose substantially more tax revenue depending on how the bill was interpreted.

The Senate version would allow the states to continue collecting Internet access taxes for three years, while the House's bill would eliminate the practice as soon as it is signed into law.

The access tax is unrelated to a state-led effort to get congressional approval to collect taxes on almost all Internet sales.

Kazaa 'Pumps Up The Volume'

Nikki Hemming, the reclusive chief of Kazaa, the wildly popular source of pirated music and movies, came in from the cold Thursday to urge the U.S. entertainment industry to work with her global file-sharing service.

Kazaa launches a major promotional campaign next week in newspapers and on college campuses that asks the 60 million Americans who use file-sharing services to demand that Hollywood "embrace the revolution" and distribute licensed movies and music through Kazaa.

"It's intended to galvanize them into action," said the Sydney,

Australia-based Hemming in a rare interview with an American newspaper. "It's mobilizing a grassroots force we believe is already there, to get them to write to the industry, to politicians, to each other. I imagine that if we add 60 million voices to my one voice, then we really will pump up the volume."

Kazaa has emerged as the leading successor to Napster, the outlaw file-swapping service that shut down in July 2001. The Kazaa Media Desktop has been downloaded more than 294 million times - twice that of its closest rival, Morpheus, and exponentially more than Napster in its heyday.

'Revolution' campaign Kazaa's new "Revolution" campaign comes as Nielsen//NetRatings finds a dramatic decline in Kazaa's usage since June, when the Recording Industry Association of America announced plans to sue individuals for illegally distributing copyrighted songs on file-swapping networks. Nielsen estimates that half as many U.S. households now download content from Kazaa, based on its survey of 40,000 homes.

Hemming, chief executive of Sharman Networks, the Australia company that owns Kazaa, dismissed the Nielsen statistics as misleading. She said Kazaa experienced a seasonal downturn that occurs every summer when students and others go on vacation. The lawsuits, rather than scare away users, have prompted them to embrace legally licensed video games, software and videos, with 45 million files distributed every month on Kazaa, she said. Some of those files are for purchase while others are available for a free preview.

The licensed content, distributed through Kazaa's Southern California-based business partner Altnet, is the cornerstone of Hemming's plans to commercialize the file-sharing phenomenon. A new version of the Kazaa service, launched in conjunction with the ad campaign, seeks to entice users to pay for content by offering bonuses - such as lyrics, a video of the artist or discounted concert tickets.

Hemming has already struck a deal to distribute a feature-film from Bollywood studio Yash Raj Films. Hindi-language film, "Supari," is being offered to Kazaa users for $2.99. About 4 percent of the users who viewed a free movie preview purchased the film, she said.

"What that says to us is that Kazaa or peer-to-peer as a distribution mechanism for a feature-length movie - and particularly, of a planned campaign - can absolutely work," Hemming said. "We may not have Hollywood today, but we have Bollywood."

Indeed, Hollywood portrays Kazaa and other file-swapping services as the villain in a movie trailer released last month, which attempts to put a human face on piracy. It features stuntman Manny Perry who describes the adverse effects piracy has on the nearly one million Americans who work in the movie industry.

The music industry has been similarly deaf to Kazaa's overtures. An RIAA spokesman pointed to the congressional testimony of RIAA Chairman Mitch Bainwol, in which he called on the file-sharing services to remove copyrighted works, inform users that uploading and downloading music without permission is illegal, and to switch off file sharing so that children and teens don't unwittingly distribute songs from their computer.

"If Kazaa or any file-sharing network wants to be considered responsible corporate citizens who don't induce their customers to break the law, they need to first start with these three common-sense steps," RIAA spokesman Jonathan Lamy said.

Public enemy No. 1 Kazaa's popularity has made it public enemy No. 1 for the entertainment industry and Congress. The Motion Picture Association of America's chief executive, Jack Valenti, cited it as the source of "multiple Maalox moments" for the studios. And Sen. Orrin G. Hatch held a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing this fall exploring its connection with pornography.

Thirty-one entertainment companies have sued Kazaa's parent company for allegedly contributing to global piracy of copyrighted works. The studios and labels also are questioning its business partner, Altnet, a Woodland Hills firm that distributes thousands of licensed songs, movies and video games on the file-swapping network.

And the RIAA this fall began suing hundreds of individual users of Kazaa and other file-swapping networks for illegally distributing copyrighted songs.

Some surveys suggest the suits, first brought in September, are achieving the desired effect. Nielsen//NetRatings found that Kazaa use has plummeted since June, with the number of U.S. households launching the Kazaa application falling from 7 million U.S. households in early June to 3.2 million for the week of Nov. 9.

Raw data collected by market researcher BigChampagne in Los Angeles shows that while fewer Americans may be downloading content from home, the Kazaa's global audience is at an all-time high. That's because people continue to access Kazaa from college campuses, workplaces and countries beyond the reach of the American legal system.

"The RIAA campaign clearly is having an effect on some of the target audience," said Eric Garland, chief executive of BigChampagne. "But, with this ever-expanding global phenomenon that is as mainstream as the Internet itself, that's not enough to halt or reverse the growth trend."

Microsoft Loses Patent Suit

A jury has ordered Microsoft to pay $62.3 million in damages for infringing on a patent held by manufacturing and technology company SPX, the companies said Friday.

SPX said its Imagexpo subsidiary sued Microsoft in October last year for infringing on its patent with a feature of Microsoft's NetMeeting conferencing product. The patent related to real-time conferencing, SPX said in a statement.

The jury awarded Imagexpo $62.3 million in compensatory damages and found that Microsoft willfully infringed the patent, the company said. The court has yet to rule on other aspects of the case that could affect the final outcome, SPX said.

"We are disappointed in the jury's verdict and we continue to stand firm in our belief that there is no infringement of any kind on the patent," Microsoft spokesperson Stacy Drake said. She added that the Imagexpo and Microsoft technologies in question are "quite different."

She also said that certain aspects of Microsoft's defense in the case have

yet to be ruled upon.

Microsoft can appeal the outcome of the case, SPX said.

Microsoft infringed on the patent in a feature of its NetMeeting product called Whiteboard, SPX said. Microsoft stopped offering the Whiteboard feature in version 3 of NetMeeting, according to information on its Web site.

"Previous versions of NetMeeting included Whiteboard functionality. We regret that we are no longer able to offer Whiteboard in this version of NetMeeting," the Web site states.

Drake said Friday that the lawsuit had "no bearing" on Microsoft's decision to stop offering the feature.

                                =~=~=~=